

It is with this, Mr. Speaker, that I say thank you and good-bye to this great American who will long serve as an inspiration to us all. We will all miss her greatly.

CONGRATULATING SAINT AGNES
MEDICAL CENTER FOR 70 YEARS
OF CARE

HON. GEORGE RADANOVICH

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, October 26, 1999

Mr. RADANOVICH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today, to recognize Saint Agnes Medical Center for 70 years of compassionate care to central California. Saint Agnes has grown from a 75-bed hospital, to a 326-bed regional healthcare delivery system, providing state-of-the-art, comprehensive health care to people of the central valley.

On August 4, 1929, Saint Agnes Medical Center opened its doors in Fresno a day earlier than planned to care for a little boy in need of emergency surgery. It is this commitment to compassionate care that central California residents have come to trust and rely upon over the past seven decades.

As part of its ongoing effort to meet the healthcare needs of central California's growing population, Saint Agnes Medical Center is embarking on a major facilities expansion, which will include expansion of its cardiac services. Construction will begin in the year 2000.

The mission statement reads as follows:

"We at Saint Agnes Medical Center, faithful to the spirit of the Sisters of the Holy Cross, strive to witness God's love through excellence in the delivery of health services. Motivated by compassion and respect, we respond to the health needs of the people of central California. We empower those who serve with us while stewarding human financial resources."

Mr. Speaker, I want to recognize Saint Agnes Medical Center for their continued compassion and service to the central valley. I urge my colleagues to join me in wishing Saint Agnes Medical Center many more years of continued growth and success.

MEMORIAL DAY SPEECH BY JOHN
R. TAPIA, PH.D.

HON. BOB STUMP

OF ARIZONA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, October 26, 1999

Mr. STUMP. Mr. Speaker, as we approach Veterans' Day and Members reflect on the importance of honoring those who served in the Armed Forces, I submit to Members the Memorial Day statement of my good friend, Dr. John R. Tapia, which follows:

DR. JOHN R. TAPIA—MEMORIAL DAY

Very few in the military ever receive formal decorations. Considering the military establishment as a whole, only a small fraction ever know the hell of actual combat. And of that fraction, only a minute percentage are ever decorated. The great percentage of this combat fraction either get wounded or killed!

So it was very appropriate that at one time this venerable event initially was designated as Decoration Day, to be observed by placing flowers and flags—in essence, decorating—the graves of our war dead.

Today, we define this day as Memorial Day, meaning, essentially, "anything, such as a monument, intended to preserve the memory of a person or event."

Memorial Day, then, is a day appointed to commemorate and decorate the dead of our Armed Services, for memory glorifies the brave. And, to glorify the brave with this memory, cemeteries have been dedicated as monuments, to honor them. To honor those who fell in battles, and those who survived the holocausts which wars create.

These are monuments of concrete and stone to serve as permanent remembrance of our gallant dead. And we must never forget who reposes in these hallowed grounds! To do so would be an act of the greatest treachery!

As commendable as this intention was, we, however, celebrate this venerable occasion only once a year! Yes, once a year, we officially remember and honor our nation's heroes. And, yes, it is most fitting that we have these cemetery monuments to remind us of their sacrifices and grievous loss, one of them my brother.

However, grievous as it is, we should also recognize another monument. A monument also dedicated to preserve this remembrance. Not only of the honored dead, but also of the honored living! A monument, not of concrete and stone, but one of compassion and selfless devotion to the care of our honored living!

It is a living monument of dedicated people concerned with the healing and well-being of those who survived the unspeakable horrors wrought by man's inhumanity to man in the course of wars! This celebration occurs, not once a year, but every living day of the year!

This living monument of which I speak, is a veterans medical center. It is a living monument dedicated to the preservation of this memory which celebrates the meaning of, not Memorial Day, but rather, Memorial Days!

As State and National Cemeteries are monuments of remembrance of our honored dead, these Medical edifices are monuments of remembrance, not only of our honored dead, but also of our honored living!

These selfless acts of mercy, which begin in the battlefields, with the life-saving efforts of those intrepid aidmen known as "corpsmen" or "medic", and progress through MASH units and General Hospitals, continue in the halls of these esteemed institutions.

It is also appropriate and proper, then, that, on this august occasion, we, the living legacy of the honored dead, recognize and pay tribute to those magnificent and benevolent volunteers, of all ages, who contribute their time to tend to the care and decoration of the graves of our honored dead, and who so unstintingly and compassionately provide care and comfort to those who courageously and honorably served our country during times of its greatest needs, at home, on foreign lands, on the seas, and in the air!

In the words of Daniel Webster:

"Let our object be our country,

"our whole country,

"and nothing but our country.

"And, by the blessing of God,

"may country itself become

"a vast and splendid monument—

"not of oppression and terror,

"but of wisdom, of peace, and of liberty—

"upon which the world may gaze with admiration

"forever!"

And, so—

To those who faithfully pay homage at these revered ceremonies;

To those who provide care and comfort for our veterans; and,

To those veterans organizations who render our final salute—

We, who will join the honored dead in these hallowed grounds—

Thank you and salute you!

COMMENTING ON THE DEPART-
MENTS OF INTERIOR AND RE-
LATED AGENCIES FISCAL YEAR
2000 CONFERENCE REPORT

HON. MICHAEL E. CAPUANO

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, October 26, 1999

Mr. CAPUANO. Mr. Speaker, today I rise in opposition to the FY 2000 Interior and Related Agencies Conference Report. This report represents poor environmental policy as it significantly weakens existing regulations and undermines current progress in environmental protection.

Most notably, the conference report fails to fully fund the administration's request for the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF). The fund is one of the most important environmental sources of revenue made available to States and is the primary tool that allows for the purchase of threatened land. As a strong proponent of this program, I am pleased with the fact that H.R. 2466 includes \$30 million in funding for the stateside LWCF grant program, however, the report provides only \$266 million of the \$800 million requested by the White House. Since 1995, the stateside LWCF grant program, the principal source of funds that allows States to acquire recreation lands, has received no funding. This has led to all statewide efforts to promote conservation projects to be halted. As we enter the 21st century, I hope Congress can continue to increase the level of funding for the LWCF.

On another note, this conference report provides only one-third of the funds requested by the administration for the President's Lands Legacy Initiative. This initiative is used to purchase lands that protect national parks, forests, and wildlife refuges which add significantly to the beauty and capacity of our national parks and forests. I believe that the Lands Legacy Initiative is a good program and that this conference report threatens to derail the administration's efforts to promote environmental preservation.

Additionally, the conference report contains several anti-environmental riders. Among these riders is a provision that rewrites the 1872 mining law to allow mill operators to dump toxic mining wastes on sites larger than 5 acres without being subject to environmental restrictions. Moreover, this report precludes the Interior Department's regulation that imposes more stringent cleanup responsibilities on mine operations being conducted on public lands and weakens current laws for forest management by instituting a 1-year moratorium on regulations intended to improve environmental compliance in the operation of hardrock mines.

The conferees also added an anti-environmental rider in the conference report that involves rural agricultural lands. This provision would allow for grazing permits to be automatically granted 10-year renewals regardless of whether or not environmental impact studies have been completed. The effect of this